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Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 EUR-08 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-20

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INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 225959

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SO
SUBJECT: SIAD-INGERSOLL MEETING

1, SUMMARY: ACTING SECRETARY INGERSOLL CALLED ON PRESIDENT SIAD AT BLAIR HOUSE 11:00 A.M., OCTOBER 11. ONE-HOUR CONVERSATION DEALT LARGELY WITH SIAD'S PERCEPTIONS OF SITUATION IN HORN, US-SOMALI RELATIONS AND THE SOVIET BASE ISSUE. SIAD PLEDGED CONTINUED NON-INTERVENTION IN ETHIOPIA AND, AS EXPECTED, DENIED EXISTENCE OF SOVIET BASE IN SOMALIA. ONCE AGAIN, SIAD AGREED READILY TO US NAVAL VISIT. SIAD DID NOT RAISE ANY OAU ISSUES. MEETING EXTREMELY CORDIAL, BUT NO NEW GROUND BROKEN.

2. SIAD WAS IN AN EXPANSIVE MOOD, FLUSHED WITH SATISFACTION OVER HIS RECEPTION IN NEW YORK AND IN WASHINGTON. HE COMMENTED ON THE BEAUTY OF WASHINGTON AND MARVELLED
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AT THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

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3. SIAD DESCRIBED SITUATION IN HORN AS "LEGACY OF COLONIALISM." HE DESCRIBED HOW SOMALIA CARVED UP BY EUROPEANS AND ETHIOPIANS, AND SOMALIA'S EFFORTS TO REUNITE SOMALI PEOPLE. ETHIOPIA AND KENYA, HE SAID, STAND TO GAIN NOTHING BY THEIR CONTINUED DOMINATION OF SOMALI-INHABITED AREAS. THEY DIVERT RESOURCES FROM DEVELOPMENT TO REPRESSION. SOMALIA WOULD CONTINUE TO TRY TO CONVINCE THEM OF THIS BY PEACEFUL MEANS.

4. SIAD SAID SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA EXTREMELY COMPLEX, FILLED WITH INTRIGUE AND VERY DIFFICULT TO PREDICT. HE HOPED THAT, WHEN DUST SETTLED, NEW REGIME WOULD BE MORE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE WITH SOMALIA THAN OLD. SOMALIA HAD NO INTENTION OF INTERVENING IN ETHIOPIA'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. IN ANY CASE, ETHIOPIANS WERE MUCH MORE POWERFUL ECONOMICALLY AND MILITARILY THAN SOMALIS, AND SOMALIA WOULD HAVE LITTLE CHANCE AGAINST THEM. SIAD DISMISSED NOTION THAT SOMALIA HAD SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS, SAYING MIG-21 WAS 10 YEARS OLD. ETHIOPIA HAD M-60 TANKS WHILE SOMALIS HAD ONLY T-34S (HE FAILED TO NOTE THAT SOMALIA HAS 180 T-34S VS. ETHIOPIA'S 11 M-60S AND 70 M-41S). SIAD SAID HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY INTERNATIONAL "AFMINSHARS" WERE SPREADING OUTLANDISH STORY THAT SOMALIA IS PLANNING TO ATTACK ETHIOPIA. HE CONCLUDED THAT ETHIOPIANS MUST BE PLANTING STORY TO JUSTIFY THEIR ARMS REQUESTS TO US.

5. SIAD SAID HE WAS "ASTONISHED" TO HEAR PRESIDENT FORD'S AND SECRETARY KISSINGER'S STATEMENTS THAT SOVIETS HAD BASE IN SOMALIA. WHOEVER MISINFORMED THEM THUS MUST BE A "CRIMINAL." THERE WAS NO SUCH BASE, HE ASSERTED, AND SHIPS OF ALL NATIONS INCLUDING US, WERE FREE TO USE SOMALI PORTS. ACTING SECRETARY REPLIED WE WOULD FOLLOW UP WITH REQUEST FOR AGREEMENT ON A SPECIFIC VISIT.

6. SIAD SAID THAT SOMALIS HAD ONLY GOOD WILL FOR THE US. IF OVER-ZEALOUS SOLDIERS OR OTHER SOMALIS WERE OCCASIONALLY IMPOLITE TO AMERICANS, IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE CONFIDENTIAL

THEY ARE SURROUNDED BY HOSTILE NEIGHBORS AND ARE NERVOUS IN DEFENDING THEIR REVOLUTION. SIAD ADDED THAT SOMALIA'S REAL ENEMIES WERE POVERTY, IGNORANCE AND DISEASE (THE COMMON ENEMIES OF MANKIND), AGAINST WHICH THEY ARE STRUGGLING RELENTLESSLY. THOSE WHO SPREAD DISCORD BETWEEN SOMALIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES ONLY IMPEDE THAT STRUGGLE.

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7. COMMENT: VISIT HAS GONE SMOOTHLY FROM BEGINNING.
SOMALIS HAVE BEEN FRANK AND STRAIGHT-FORWARD
IN CONVERSATION AND WE HAVE RECIPROCATED. CONVERSATIONS
BY OTHER AMERICANS WITH SIAD, ARTEH, ET AL, WILL BE
SUMMARIZED IN SEPTEL. INGERSOLL

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